

LAHOMA

BY
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CHAPTER VI.

A Young Man's Fancy.

"I WANT you to enjoy yourself," went on Brick, in reply to Lahoma's query. "And when I'm old and no 'count you'd need somebody to take care of you, and you'd go full equipped and ready to stand up to any civilized person that tried to run a bluff on you."

"But, oh, I want to go—I want to go out there—where there ain't no plains and alkali and buffalo grass—where they's pavements and policemen and people in beautiful clothes! I don't mean now. I mean when I've got civilized." She drew herself up proudly. "I wouldn't go till I was civilized—till I was like them." She turned impulsively to Brick. "But you've got to go with me when I go! I'm going to stay with you till I'm fit to go, and then you're going to stay with me the rest of my life."

"Am I fit to go with her?" Brick appealed to Bill Atkins.

"You ain't," Bill replied.

"I ain't fit," Brick declared firmly. The tears were in Lahoma's eyes. She looked from one to the other, her little face deeply troubled. Suddenly she grabbed up her books and started toward the stove. "Then this here civilizing is going to stop!" she declared.

"Lahoma!" Brick cried in dismay. "Yes, it is—unless you promise to stay with me when I go to live in the big world."

"Honey, I'll promise you this: When you are ready to live out there I'll sure go with you and stay with you—if you want me, when the time comes."

Lahoma seized his hand and jumped up and down in delight. "It's a safe promise," remarked Bill Atkins dryly.

One evening in May a tall lithe figure crept along the southern base of the mountain range, following its curves with cautious feet as if fearful of discovery. He was a young man of twenty-one or two, bronzed, free of movement, agile of step. His face was firm, handsome and open. A few yards from Brick Willock's dugout now stood a neat log cabin, and not far from the door of this cabin was a girl of about fifteen seated on the grass.

She had been reading, but her book had slipped to her feet. With hands clasped about her knee and head tilted back she was watching the lazy white clouds that stretched like wisps of scattered cotton across the blue field of the sky. The young man stretched himself where a block of granite and, below it, a cedar tree effectively protected him from discovery. Thus hidden he stared at the girl unblinkingly.

For two years he had led the life of a cowboy, exiled from his kind, going with the boys from lower Texas to Kansas along the Chisholm trail, overseeing great herds of cattle, caring for them day and night, scarcely ever under a roof, even that of a dugout. Through rain and storm the ground had been his bed. During these two years of hard life, reckless companions and exacting duties he had easily slipped into the grooves of speech and thought common to his fellows. Only his face, his unconscious movements and accents distinguished him from the other boys of "Old Man Walker," the boss of the G-Bar outfit. On no other condition but that of apparent assimilation could he have retained his place with Walker's ranchmen.

For two years he had seen no one like the girl of the cave.

That was wonderful hair, its brown tresses gleaming, though untouched by the sun, as if in it were enmeshed innumerable particles of light. The face was more wonderful. There was the seal of innocence on the lips, the proof of fearlessness in the eyes, the touch of thought on the brow, the sign of purpose about the resolute little chin. The slender brown hands spoke of life in the open air, and the glow of the cheeks told of burning suns. Her form, her attitude, spoke not only of instinctive grace, but of a certain wildness in admirable harmony with the surrounding scene.

It seemed to him that in this young girl, who had the look and pose of a woman, he had found what hitherto he had vainly sought in the wilderness—the beauty and the charm of it, refined and separated from its sordidness and uncouthness—in a word, from all that was base and ugly.

At last he tore himself away, retraced his steps as cautiously as he had come and flung himself upon the pony left waiting at a sheltered nook far from the cave. As he sped over the plains toward the distant herd it came to him suddenly in a way not before experienced that it was May, that the air was balmy and fragrant and that the land, softly lighted in the clear twilight, was singularly beautiful. He seemed breathing the roses back home, which recalled another face, but not for long. The last time he had seen that eastern face the dew had lain on the early morning grass. How could a face so different make him think of them?

The G-Bar headquarters was on the western bank of what was then known as Red river, but was really the North fork of Red river. "Old Man Walker," who was scarcely past middle age, had built his corral on the margin of the plain which extended to that point in an unbroken level from a great distance and which, having reached that point, dropped without warning, a sheer precipice, to an extensive lake.

The young man reached the corral after a ride of twelve or thirteen miles, most of the distance through a country of difficult sand. He galloped up to the rude inclosure, surrounded by a cloud of dust through which his keen gray eyes discovered Mizoo on the eve of leaving camp. Mizoo was one of the men whose duty it was to ride the line all night—the line that the young man had guarded all day—to keep Walker's cattle from drifting.

"Come on, Miz," called the young man as the other swung upon his broncho; "I'm going back with you."

The lean, leather-skinned, sandy mustached cattleman uttered words not meet for print, but expressive of hearty pleasure. "Ain't you had enough of it, Bill?" he added. "I'd think you'd want to lay up for tomorrow's work."

"Oh, I ain't sleepy!" the young man declared as they rode away side by side. "I couldn't close an eye tonight, and I want to talk."

Mizoo was so called from his habit of attributing his most emphatic aphorisms to "his aunt, Miss Sue of Missouri," a lady held by his companions to be a purely fictitious character, a convenient "Mrs. Harris," to give weight to sayings worn smooth from centuries of use.

"I'll talk my head off," Mizoo declared, "if that'll keep you on the move with me."

"What I want you to talk about is that little girl you met on the trail down in Texas seven years ago."

Mizoo burst out in a hearty laugh. "I reckon it suits you better to take her as a little kid," he cried, his tall form shaking convulsively. "I'll never forget how you looked, Bill, when we tried to run a bluff on her daddy last month. Yep, 'Old Man Walker' never knewed what a proposition he was handing us when he ordered us to drive the old mountain lion out of his lair! Pity you and me was at the tail end of the attacking party. Fust thing we knowed them other four galoots was falling backwards a-getting out of that trap of a cave, and the bullets was whizzing about our ears!"

He broke off to shout with laughter. "And it was all done by one old settler and his gal, them standing out open and free with their breech loaders, and us hiking out for camp like whipped curs!"

The young man was impatient, but he compelled himself to speak calmly. "As I never got around the spur of the mountain before you fellows were in full retreat, I object to being classed with the whipped curs, and you'll bear that in mind, Mizoo. You saw the girl all right, didn't you?"

"You bet I did, and as soon as I see her I knowed it was the same I'd come across on the trail seven years ago. Her daddy give it to us plain that if he ever caught one of us inside his cave he'd kill us like so many coyotes, and I reckon he would. Well, he's got as much right to his claim as anybody else. This land don't belong to nobody, and there he's been a-squinting considerable longer than we've laid out this ranch. He was in the right of it, but what I admire was his being able to hold his rights. Lots of folks has rights but they ain't man enough to hold 'em. And if you could have seen that gal, her eyes like two big burning suns, and her mouth closed like a steel trap, and her hand as steady on that trigger as the mountain rock behind her! Lord, Bill, what a trembly, knock-kneed, meaching sort of a husband she's a-going to fashion to her hand, one of these days! But pretty? None more so. And a-going all to waste out here in the desert!"

"And now about that child seven years ago," the young man said.

"Why, yes, me and the boys was bringing about 2,000 head up to Abilene when we come on to this same prairie and another man walking the trail, with a little gal coming behind 'em on her pony. And it was this same gal, I reckon she was seven or eight year old then. Well, sir, I just thought as I looked at her that I never seen a prettier sight in this world, and I reckon I ain't, for which I looked at the same gal the other day the gun she was holding up to her eye sort of dazzled me so I couldn't take stock of all her good points. We went into camp that evening, and all of us got pretty soft and mellow, what from the unusualness of the meeting, and we asked the old codger if we could all come over to his camp and shake hands with the gal. He'd drawn back from us about a mile, he was that skeered to be sociable. So after considerable haggling and jawing he said we could, and here we come, just about sundown, all of us looking sheepish enough to be carved for nation."

but everlasting determined to take that gal by the paw."

"Well," said the young man who had often heard this story, but had never been treated to the sequel, "what happened then, Mizoo? You always stop at the same place. Didn't you shake hands with her?"

The other ruminated in deep silence for some time, then rejoined: "I don't know how it is. A fellow can talk about the worst devilment in creation with a free rein and no words hot enough to blister his tongue, but let him run up against something simple like that and the bottom of his lungs seems to fall out. I guess they ain't no more to be told. That was all there was to it, though I might add that the next day we come along by old Whisky Simeon's joint that sets out on the sand hills, you know, and we put spurs to our bronks and went whooping by, with old Whisky Simeon staring and a-hollering after us like he thought we was crazy. I don't know as I had missed a drunk before for five year when the materials was ready found for its making. And I ain't never forgot the little kid with the brown hair and the eyes that seen to your bottom layer."

Darkness came on and the hour grew late, but few words were exchanged as they rode the weary miles that marked the limit of the range. The midnight luncheon beside a small fire, over which the coffee steamed, rounded something like cheerful conversation.



Few Words Were Exchanged as They Rode the Weary Miles.

which, however, flickered and flared uncertainly like the bonfire.

"Guess I'll leave you now," remarked the young man when the fire had died away.

"Yes, better turn in, for you're most uncommon dull, you know," Mizoo replied frankly. "I would be just about as much company for me if you'd hike out and leave me your picture to carry along."

Instead of taking the direction toward the river the young man set out at a gallop for the distant mountain range, which in the gloom seemed not far away. After an hour's hard riding he reached it.

(To be Continued.)

CASH PRIZES FOR OUR GOOD NUT TREES, OR TREE CROPS

A New Agriculture, Or Nature's Greatest Engines of Production, Or Trees That Work for Us, Or A Chance for the Boys to Hunt Trees and Make Money

The most valuable land in the world is in the Sahara Desert. It is made valuable by the late trees that cover every spot where enough water can be had to make them grow. This great land value comes because man has there utilized the productive power of the tree, nature's greatest engine of production. It is really remarkable that we in the United States have used trees so little to do our work for us.

An orchard of black walnuts, or shagbark hickories, or native hazels, or Ohio Valley pecans, with trees as good as the best wild ones now growing would be very, very valuable. Why don't we have them? Merely because we haven't noticed and haven't thought. It is high time we caught up with the people of the desert.

To help bring promising nut trees to light, and thus start a new industry, the Northern Nut Growers' Association is offering cash prizes of from \$10 to \$50 for the best tree of black walnuts, butternuts, shagbark hickories, hazel nuts and northern pecans. Send a dozen nuts from the best nut tree of any kind that you know of to Dr. W. C. Deming, secretary of the Northern Nut Growers' Association, Georgetown, Conn., and ask for particulars of the prizes and rules of the contest.

We hope some of our readers will get these prizes, for there are some very fine nuts produced in the territory covered by this paper.

MORE FUR IS SLOGAN

WHAT FASHION MAKERS DICTATE FOR FALL WEAR.

Cuffs on Every Jacket Are Now Muffs—Hems of Skirts and Jackets Smothered in Bands of Fur.

It is probable that women will never be persuaded to give up pieces of peltry that cover the shoulders; it is the remaining savage instinct in them to fling around their bodies the skins of wild beasts; this truth was proved during the summer, when every woman who could afford the price of a fox, white or otherwise, arrayed herself in it, even on days when a mosquito netting would have been too warm a covering. She temporarily reverted to the cave-woman.

The furriers, however, need not spend sleepless nights wondering where their rent is to be obtained, for paradise is opening to them. Fur, and again fur, and still more fur, is the slogan of the fashion-makers.

As to Neckpieces.

There may not be a great quantity of neckpieces worn, as fashion does not indicate any loose covering for the shoulders that will hide their lines, but so much fur is demanded elsewhere that it is more probable the furriers will spend sleepless nights wondering where to get it.

The cuffs, for instance, on every jacket are now muffs. They extend to the elbows and flare to a width of eight and ten inches at the hands. This is a part of the Russian influence, and there is every reason to believe that these immense bell-shaped accessories will be sought by every woman who likes to take up the extreme thing.

In addition to such lavish use of peltry on the sleeves, the hems of skirts, as well as jackets, are smothered in bands of fur. Evening wraps are in the nature of Russian coats, and one of the newest, by Callot, has entire sleeves of fur that are shaped out from the shoulders into a great



White Broadcloth Trimmed With Beaver Fur.

width at the wrist. There are other evening coats that have round Victorian tops of seal skin, with all the edges outlined with ten inches of seal skin. As for flaring fur redingotes—that's another chapter.

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JEWELRY FOR TAFFETA FROCK

Stones of Color in Contrast to Dress Are One of the Novelties of the Season.

With the newest taffeta frocks contrasting colors are worn in the jewelry. Turquoise with dark green, sapphires on French pink, amethysts with cherry or gray, and rubies on pale blue are the very last word in gem and silk combinations.

Silver settings are sometimes used for the opaque stones, but for the others the mountings are of platinum or delicately worked gold.

Lapis-lazuli mounted in repousse silver is used in a handsome necklace worn with a sage green taffeta afternoon gown and an unusual hat completes the costume. The hat is of soft, two-toned straw, green above, faced with dark blue; the brim is broad and the crown low and rounded, while its only trimming is a jeweled ornament matching exactly the lapis and silver necklace.

The New French Ribbons.

Paris finds, for one thing, that ribbons made this year are of a very inferior quality. The French ribbon industry, it seems, was largely carried on by men. The men went to war and women went into the ribbon factories. They are doing their best, but as yet the best ribbons they can turn out are inferior to the ribbons the Paris dress-makers desire.

In some cases the dressmakers can make silk take the place of ribbons. But this poor quality of ribbons has helped to decide the nature of the trimming of autumn millinery.

ON THE FUNNY SIDE



Hubby's Suggestion.

"Now, would you have a fern for a centerpiece, or a rosebush in bloom?" "My dear, scenery is all right in its place, but your meals are a trifle decorative. Might I make a vulgar suggestion as to a centerpiece?"

"Yes." "I recommend a beefsteak smothered with onions."

Living in Hope.

"There is nothing annoys me more than family arguments," said Mr. Bobblings.

"But how on earth can you avoid them?" asked Mr. Blabswaiter.

"I can't avoid them on earth," replied Mr. Bobblings. "That's why I cling to the hope of a hereafter."

Not What He Meant.

"If I have my way we will never have a quarrel!"

"Why, I thought we were going to marry?"

"We are."

"Then why do you talk as if you would leave me forever if you had your way?"

Logical Deduction.

"Young Dippy left—Miss Maymie's house very hurriedly the other evening."

"Yes, I noticed he made a hasty move to go when she mentioned that her father had told her he had some kind of a movement on foot."

The Easy Epithet.

"Father," said the small boy, "what is a demagogue?"

"A demagogue is a man who can persuade people to listen to arguments with which you do not agree."

ELEVATING.



Josh—Penly tells me there is something elevating about his new play. Bosh—I suppose he means the elevator. It is being produced at a roof garden.

Familiar Odor.

This is the age of gasoline. A truth we realize full well. As proved by the signs of all men seen And also by our sense of smell.

Prescribing a Cure.

"Mr. Jones, you will either have to marry at once or leave our employ."

"But why are you so anxious that I marry?"

"While you are in love you do not half attend to your duties, and you must either be cured or fired."

An Obstreperous Catch.

"I hear you caught a 40-pound catfish in your gill net."

"We did."

"Make much of a fuss?"

"Tore the net all to shreds. For a while we thought we had snared a submarine."

For Obvious Reasons.

"A fascinating widow, with an equally fascinating daughter."

"A great team, eh?"

"I'd hardly call them a team. They never shine together."

His Work.

"So you have work now, Sam?"

"Oh, yes, sah; I's got work."

"What are you doing, Sam?"

"Why, I's gittin' my wife washin' 't do, boss."

Paw's Idea of It.

Little Lemuel—Say, paw, is the snare of a drum a kind of trap?"

Paw—No, son. You are probably thinking of the snare of the wily drummer.

According to the Cards.

She (at the wedding)—The bride looks like a queen.

He—Yes; and the bridegroom looks like the deuce.

HOW IT HAPPENED.

"I wish," said the young man in the parlor scene, "that you would be less formal and call me by my first name." "I'd rather not," replied the fair maid on the other end of the sofa. "Your last name suits me, all right." And a few minutes later they were discussing the merits of the different firms that supply furniture on the installment plan.

Those Wooden Shoes.

Bacon—I understand France makes and wears 4,000,000 pairs of wooden shoes every year.

Egbert—When they see a man going down street carrying a pair of wooden shoes in his hands, I suppose it is hard to tell if he's going to the doctor to have a splinter taken out of his foot, or to the carpenter's to have 'em half-soled.

All Mixed Up.

"Well, how did you come out with your jury duty?"

"I don't like it," confessed Mrs. Wombat. "When the lawyer for the plaintiff got through, I was sure he was right. When the attorney for the defendant finished, I felt certain he was right. When the judge got through, I didn't know who was right."

AS OTHERS SEE US.



Mabel—Reggy Staylate's as bright as a dollar.

Kitty—Huh! He reminds me of a punched nickel.

Mabel—What's the answer?

Kitty—He's so hard to get rid of.

Bound to Right Itself.

Upon its axis turns the earth, So let not grim suspicion frown And say in tones devoid of mirth It's permanently upside down.

Selecting a Vest.

"Haven't you any larger checks?"

"No," said the tailor, "these are the largest I have."

"I fear you have not a very extensive line of cloth."

"These are about as large as checks come in cloth. I might possibly make you up a vest out of lineoleum."

Wonders of Nature.

"Nature provides," declared the editor of the Plunkville Palladium.

"What's on your mind?"

"The horses used to eat the grass that grew in our streets. When automobiles came we thought the grass would get the best of us, but the gasoline drippings kill it off."

Same Thing.

"When explorers brought those buried cities in Europe to the surface, they did exactly the same thing as the volcanoes which destroyed them."

"How so?"

"They raised them to the ground."

Such Is Life.

"Don't you think it is extremely vulgar to dress as Miss Stylish does to attract attention on the street?"

"Yes, indeed! I wonder who her dressmaker is."

"I asked her, but she wouldn't tell me."—Lehigh Burr.

NOT THE KIND HE WANTED.



Deacon Hardywyder—Young man, I want ten see a fust class, a-number-one separator—

Percy Smart (a new clerk and not familiar with farm implements)—Ah! ha! So you are having trouble with your better-half, eh? Well, sir, there is an excellent divorce lawyer on the tenth floor.

Simple Method.

How easy it would be to run The most extensive nation If all its business could be done By learned conversation.

Facts in the Case.

Mrs. Dash—Are you still keeping boarders?

Mrs. Hash—No; my boarders are keeping me.